

WESTCHESTER MUNICIPAL PLANNING FEDERATION (WMPF)
PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD NOMINATION FORM

SUBMITTED BY: THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
MUNICIPALITY: THE CITY OF YONKERS



PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Nominations for "Planning Achievement Award" must be submitted by
March 20, 2020 to:

Electronic submissions (preferred) <http://www.wmpf.org/award-submissions>
or

John Tegeder, WMPF Director-at-Large
Yorktown Planning Department
1974 Commerce Street, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
(914) 962-6565 — (e-mail) jtegeder@wmpf.org

Project Name: Downtown Yonkers Mural Program
Municipality: The City of Yonkers
Project location: Government Center Garage (87 Nepperhan Avenue), Daylighting III
(Streets) Park (Nepperhan Avenue and New Main Street), and the Buena Vista
Project Parking garage (20 Buena Vista Avenue).
Description: Over the past few years local and NYC-based artists were commissioned
by the City of Yonkers to create murals that touch on prominent
Yonkers themes such as wildlife, flowers/plants, and the Hudson River.

On a separate sheet, in 250 words or less, please describe the special planning
achievement(s) associated with this project.

Funding Sources: City of Yonkers Capital Projects funding, Yonkers Community
Development Agency through its Downtown Revitalization
Initiative Program funds
Participating Groups: A collaborative effort between City Planning, the Parks
Department, Public Works, the Yonkers Downtown/Waterfront BID,
and the Yonkers Parking Authority.
Submitted by: The Department of Planning and Development
Name and title: Rosa Sudol, Community Development Program Assistant
Municipality: The City of Yonkers
Address: 87 Nepperhan Avenue, Yonkers NY 10701
Telephone: 914-377-6650 x6654
E-Mail: rosa.sudol@yonkersny.gov
Commissioner: Wikson.Kimball@yonkersny.gov

Support materials: Please submit in 8 1/2" x 11" format, photographs, drawings, reports,
newspaper articles or other materials that will assist us in assessing the project. **Please
note that electronic submissions of all materials are preferred; otherwise, please
submit 3 sets of your application package for WMPF review.**

A thriving art presence in a municipality energizes the environment, inspires economic development, and connects communities with public art. The City of Yonkers continues the downtown Yonkers mural program in an effort to contribute to the revitalization process. Our murals, new and old, inspire individuals from the five boroughs, Westchester County, and beyond to explore the heart of Yonkers and all of the food, nightlife, and culture that it offers. These murals drive economic development and strengthen that our City is not only a quaint place to visit, but a destination to live.

According to Americans for the Arts, “Arts & Economic Prosperity V” found that the arts-and-culture sector in Westchester County generates \$172.3 million in total economic activity, supporting almost 5,200 full-time-equivalent jobs. Attendees of cultural events spend an average of \$21.84 per person, per event which doesn’t include the dinner, parking, childcare, souvenirs and gifts even hotel stays associated with attending cultural events. The economic impact of the arts in the county has increased by more than 218% since 1995 with 62% of non-residents recently surveyed indicating that their primary purpose for visiting Westchester County was specifically to attend the arts or cultural event that they were surveyed at.

Recognizing that the arts play an integral part not only in the economic engine of a city but also in the urban planning feel of the City, Yonkers undertook several public art murals in the last three years as a continuation of the downtown mural program. These pieces include Luisa Vibes *Waterfront Vibes*, Surface of Beauty’s *Orange Joy*, Katori Walker’s *Vigorizar-Daylighting III*, and Daisy Rossetti’s *Come Fly with me*. Each embody the wildlife theme found in our past murals, such as Eelco Van den berg’s *Wildlife* (2016) created in Daylighting I.

Additionally, our murals are a reflection of our community. Luisa’s *Waterfront Vibes* represents the river’s current but is also influenced by her Portuguese ancestry given the traditional patterns and Katori’s *Vigorizar-Daylighting III* depicts a rendering of “mother nature” but simultaneously reflects on her African American heritage. David Boyajian’s, *Flow*, features silver oak leaves which symbolizes military service and honors our veterans. *Grampa* created by Fumero in 2015, celebrates the aging with vibrant, lively colors. Our muralists were selected through a call and were chosen on how effectively their work represented our diverse community. The continuation of our program has successfully connected our community with art that truly speaks to them while revitalizing and branding our city as a place to visit *and* experience public art.

Artworks mentioned:



Fumero, *Grampa*, 2015

Location: Yonkers Department of Motor Vehicles (1 Larkin Plaza)

Size: 40 by 25 ft

Cost: \$10,000

Funding Source: City Capital



David Boyajian, *Flow*, 2019

Location: Daylighting III Park (Nepperhan Avenue and New Main Street)

Size: 10' tall, 5' wide, and 46" deep

Cost: \$5,000

Funding Source: Yonkers Community Development Agency (Downtown Revitalization Initiative Program funds)



Eelco Van den berg, *Wildlife*, 2016

Location: Mill Street Courtyard (entrances from North Broadway, Main Street, and Warburton Ave)

Size: 40 by 50 ft

Cost: \$8,169

Funding Source: Yonkers Community Development Agency (Downtown Revitalization Initiative Program funds)



Katori Walker, (utility box mural) *Vigorizar-Daylighting III*, 2019

Location: Daylighting III Park (Nepperhan Avenue and New Main Street)

Size: 22"W X 72"L X 38"H

Cost: \$1,115

Funding Source: Yonkers Community Development Agency (Downtown Revitalization Initiative Program funds)



Luisa Baptista, *Waterfront Vibes*, 2019

Location: Buena Vista Parking garage (20 Buena Vista Ave)

Size: 15 by 17 ft (elevator wall)

Cost: \$4,370

Funding Source: Yonkers Community Development Agency (Downtown Revitalization Initiative Program funds)

Permission granted by City of Yonkers Parking Authority



Daisy Rossetti, (utility box mural) *Come Fly with Me*, 2019

Location: Daylighting III Park (Nepperhan Avenue and New Main Street)

Size: 22"W X 72"L X 38"H

Cost: \$1,170

Funding Source: Yonkers Community Development Agency (Downtown Revitalization Initiative Program funds)



Surface of Beauty (Natasha May Platt), *Orange Joy*, 2019

Location: Government Center Garage (87 Nepperhan Avenue)

Size: 900 square feet, 30 feet high.

Cost: \$11,144

Funding Source: Yonkers Community Development Agency (Downtown Revitalization Initiative Program funds)

Permission granted by City of Yonkers Parking Authority

PUBLICATIONS

Lohud's publication on Surface of Beauty's (Natasha May Platt's), *Orange Joy*:

Yonkers unveils a new mural downtown

Mark Vergari, Rockland/Westchester Journal News

Published 4:58 p.m. ET Jan. 7, 2020



The city of Yonkers unveiled their latest public art mural on the side of the Government Parking Garage on New Main Street, Jan. 7, 2020. Rockland/Westchester Journal News

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Brooklyn artist Surface of Beauty (Natasha May Platt) is pictured in front of her new public art mural called "Orange Joy," painted on the side of the Government Center Garage on New Main Street in Yonkers, Jan. 7. The new mural joins dozens of public art pieces displayed throughout downtown Yonkers. This 900-square-foot mural, commissioned by the city, features several wildflowers native to the region. It is designed as a focal point of healing and joy for the community, with larger-than-life blossoming flowers.



A new public art mural called "Orange Joy" by Brooklyn artist Surface of Beauty (Natasha May Platt), pictured on the side of the Government Center Garage on New Main Street in Yonkers, was celebrated Jan. 7, 2020. The new mural joins dozens of public art pieces displayed throughout the Yonkers downtown. This 900 square foot mural commissioned by the city, features several wildflowers native to the region. It is designed as a focal point of healing and joy for the community with larger than life blossoming flowers. (Photo: Mark Vergari/The Journal News)



Brooklyn artist Surface of Beauty (Natasha May Platt) is pictured in front of her new public art mural called "Orange Joy", that's painted on the side of the Government Center Garage on New Main Street in Yonkers, Jan. 7, 2020. The new mural joins dozens of public art pieces displayed throughout the Yonkers downtown. This 900 square foot mural commissioned by the city, features several wildflowers native to the region. It is designed as a focal point of healing and joy for the community with larger than life blossoming flowers. (Photo: Mark Vergari/The Journal News)



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Below is a Yonkers Times' publication on Luisa Baptista's *Waterfront Vibes* mural and the City's new sculpture garden along the waterfront, which features sculpture installations by local artists (pictured below).

NEWS COMMUNITY ENTERTAINMENT

WATERFRONT'S LATEST PUBLIC ARTWORK UNVEILED

July 30, 2019



new art along the downtown Yonkers waterfront by Yonkers-based artists Paul Greco and Luisa Baptista. Photo by Maurice Mercado

The City of Yonkers recently unveiled its newest public art additions to the downtown waterfront created by the prominent Yonkers-based artists Paul Greco and Luisa Baptista.

Baptista, more commonly known by her artist name Luisa Vibes, unveiled her mural “Downtown Waterfront Vibes,” located in the Buena Vista Parking Garage Center at 8 Buena Vista Ave. Her mural is a contemporary piece of art meant to complement the waterfront.

Greco also unveiled his mosaic “The Meditation Circle,” located in the sculpture meadow along the waterfront, at 20 Water Grant St., which connects to the larger urban culture of the downtown. “The Meditation Circle” is the latest addition to the meadow, as his artwork joins dozens of public art pieces displayed through the Yonkers downtown and contributes to the city’s burgeoning arts scene.

“Yonkers has quickly gained notoriety as a destination city for artists to live, work and exhibit,” said Mayor Mike Spano. “Thanks to the newest additions from Yonkers’ own Paul and Luisa, who have contributed their pieces of art to the beautiful mosaic that is Yonkers.”

Baptista is a lifelong Yonkers resident and artist who immigrated from Portugal at the age of 3. Early on in school, she attended Charles E. Gorton High School where she excelled beyond expectations and lobbied for advanced art classes. Baptista then went on to earn a bachelor of arts degree from Marymount College in Tarrytown, where she studied psychology and studio art and became directly involved in its international English school, EF, which reinforced her multicultural awareness and appreciation for the arts.

In her professional career, Baptista has worn many hats – as an educator, mentor and manager – but always remained an artist who sought to visually intertwine and bring together divergent and contrasting parts of a whole.

Greco is a Yonkers-based artist who attended The School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, focusing primarily in painting and sculpture. He is an esteemed member of the Upstream Gallery and has constantly exhibited his work there and abroad.

“I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to create this permanent sculpture installation titled ‘The Meditation Circle’ for the people and the City of Yonkers,” said Greco. “My goal was to create a special place where people could feel peaceful and enlightened – a place for conversations and discussions of issues large and small.”